

Summary of motions for Ramblers General Council 2018

This is a summary of the motions submitted to Ramblers for debate at the General Council on 7th & 8th April 2018. You can find the full information and background notes here:

<http://www.ramblers.org.uk/~media/Files/About%20us/Motions%202018.pdf?la=en>. Your representatives are expected to listen to the arguments for and against and use that as the basis their voting decision. The Area should not mandate them to vote in a particular way. However, if you have any views on the motions proposed, you can make them known to your representatives so that you can inform their decision. Your representatives this year are Steve Thomas and John Kummer. Please send any comments to Steve whose contact details can be found in your walks booklet and at <http://nmc-ramblers.org.uk/contacts.html> .

Amendments to these motions can be submitted by Areas. If you feel your Area should do this please contact Steve without delay. The deadline for submission of amendments is 3rd April 2018 but it is important that such amendments are unambiguously worded and arguments in their favour are fully developed. There is help from Ramblers to do this but the process takes time.

1. Regional staff to liaise with Devolved Regional Government

This General Council calls upon the Board of Trustees to appoint regionally based staff to ensure Ramblers' interests are fully represented in those Ramblers' Areas where Combined Authorities have additional devolved powers.

Proposed by Greater Manchester & High Peak Area (applies to England).

2. Risk to the adequate maintenance of Rights of Way

This General Council is concerned that during the current period of financial constraints being placed on Local Authorities with responsibility for Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) some may be unable to meet their statutory obligations. This can result in unreasonable delays or longer term failure to keep PRoWs free of obstruction and with infrastructure such as gates, stiles and bridges being inadequately maintained by landowners or themselves.

The Board of Trustees is encouraged to continue to make the case to Government, including health and tourism benefits, for necessary resources to be available to local authorities to meet their obligations on PRoWs, and to work with others in securing this. In addition, the Board is encouraged to provide support to Areas and Groups to campaign at a local level for adequate levels of appropriately qualified and experienced staff responsible for keeping PRoWs open including definitive map teams with access to the other resources that they require.

Proposed by Northamptonshire Area (applies to England).

3. Donate-a-Gate Schemes

This General Council requests the Board of Trustees to:

- encourage Areas/Groups to set up 'Donate-a-Gate' schemes;
- match funds raised by volunteers, subject to a limit, to buy gates;

- publicise this good work in helping to maintain the walking environment, with the aim of attracting new members.

Proposed by Surrey Area (applies to GB).

4. Roadside signage of Public Rights of Way

This General Council notes that it is the 50th anniversary of the 1968 Countryside Act requiring English and Welsh highway authorities to signpost public rights of way where they meet with metalled Roads. It further notes that the Pathwatch data indicates that few authorities have complied with the requirements in full. Council therefore requests that the Ramblers gives priority to working with the relevant authorities to bring about a full compliance within the next 5 years as part of the Pathwatch campaign.

Proposed by Shropshire Area (applies to England and Wales).

5. Voluntary question for membership form

This General Council requests the Board of Trustees to consider adding the following VOLUNTARY question to the membership form – ‘do you have any skills, knowledge or understanding you might think useful to the Organisation? If so please provide details’.

This information, if volunteered, to be stored on a database, should be of use to the Ramblers if seeking particular skills for specific tasks or activities.

Proposed by North Strathclyde Area (applies to GB).

Steve Thomas
Chair
North and Mid Cheshire Ramblers
7th March 2018